

# IMPROVEMENT OF THE HOMES OF THE POOR

Many Letters of Encouragement Received by Committee.

## BILL PREPARED FOR CONGRESS

Effort to Be Made to Secure Necessary Legislation on Condemning Houses in Which Filth and Uncleanliness Is Found.

The third meeting of the committee on the improvement of the housing conditions of the District was held in the office of the Associated Charities yesterday afternoon. There were present S. W. Woodward, chairman, Col. George Truesdell, vice chairman, Dr. George Kober, second vice chairman, and Messrs. H. B. F. MacFarland, Herbert Wadsworth, S. R. Boyd, Bishop Satterlee, Gen. John M. Wilson, R. H. Warner, Thomas W. Smith, Canon H. Rudolph, Capt. Chester H. Harding, Gen. George N. Sternberg, Gen. W. K. Van Rye, Charles P. Neill, S. W. Currier, J. B. T. Tupper, and Charles F. Welser.

A letter was read from Gen. Leonard Wood, who had been invited to serve upon the committee after he returns to the United States, in which he said: "I shall arrive in Washington about May 25, and shall be very glad to be of service to you and your committee, and will take up the matter with you on my arrival."

Secretary Welser read letters of advice, encouragement, and congratulation from similar committees in other cities.

A letter was received from Hon. R. T. Payne, of Boston, speaking of aggravated tenement house evils in New York and Boston, in which he said: "I believe the housing conditions in most of the other great cities demand the immediate attention of public-spirited citizens of sound judgment and resolved that serious evils shall not take root and become aggravated within their limits. I believe that nuisance removal, epidemic inspection, cleansing, ventilation, and suppression of overcrowding are all good up to a certain point, but in relation to the persistent and slowly accumulating evils of our great towns the social reformers, so to speak, that is in them all, these are mere surface measures.

The destructive part of the duties of the authorities is more important, if possible, than the constructive. The first and most essential step is to get rid of the existing haunts of moral and physical degradation."

Mr. Robert W. de Forest, a New York attorney whom President Roosevelt, as Governor of New York, appointed on a special tenement house commission, and who was recently appointed on a similar commission by Mayor Low, of New York, wrote the committee a letter of congratulation in which he said:

"It would seem to me important, unless there be extraordinary devotion on the part of some volunteer member of the committee, that it should have the professional assistance of some one who can give his whole time to the work, and usually such services must be paid for."

Mr. de Forest also offered to loan to the Washington committee the tenement house exhibit used to awaken public interest in Paris, New York, Buffalo, Chicago, and elsewhere.

Mr. Ernest B. Bishnell, general superintendent of the Chicago "Bureau of Charities," wrote a letter of encouragement, and a number of others were received.

The committee then went into the consideration of a number of reports received of personal inspection made by local members. Messrs. T. W. Smith and S. W. Currier reported a surprising condition of filth and uncleanliness, and absolute neglect of sanitary conditions in the northeast section of Washington within a square of the Capitol grounds. In one or two instances the houses were used by five or six families who lived in one or two rooms. At another place in the same locality a woman was found in a hotel who was doing the washing for ten families.

Mr. C. H. Rudolph, Mrs. H. B. F. MacFarland, and Mr. J. B. T. Tupper reported that in alleys and small streets of south-west Washington they were impressed by the filth in yards and houses, by unclean closets and overcrowded rooms. They suggested that condemnations of unsanitary property be made on Van Street, between M and N Streets southwest. Capt. Chester Harding, assistant to the Engineer Commissioner of the District, read the substitute bill for condemnation of unsanitary dwellings, which was prepared by Dr. W. C. Woodward, the health officer.

A special committee, consisting of Hon. John W. Foster, chairman; Messrs. John Jay Edson, Geo. Walter Wyman, Dr. George M. Kober, and Prof. Charles H. Neill were instructed to ask a hearing on the bill before the Congressional District Committee.

Secretary Welser reported that Senators McMillan and Gallinger have already made an inspection of some of the squalid resorts, and are personally familiar with the existing conditions.

It was decided to address a letter to the District Commissioners, making a report of the generally unsanitary conditions which could be improved to a certain extent under the existing laws and ask that special attention be given them with a view to overcoming them.

The committee will meet again next Saturday.

## PROBLEMS OF ATMOSPHERE.

Air Constituents at Nine Miles Practically Unchanged.

LONDON, April 12.—Prof. Dewar, discussing the problems of atmosphere at the Royal Institution last evening, said that his constituents at a height of nine miles had been ascertained to be practically in the same proportion as those on the sea level.

But his theory showed that there must be continuous variation at greater heights. Thus, at eighteen miles height, carbonic acid should disappear; at thirty-seven miles, oxygen, and at sixty-two miles, nitrogen should be gone. Hence, it was not to be expected that much change had been detected in the samples which had hitherto been brought down by balloons.

He believed, however, that it would be found possible to get samples by means of balloons from heights of twenty miles and more. Whether there was inter-planetary atmosphere, or whether our atmosphere was limited to a height of some fifty miles, was a disputed point.

One school held that inter-planetary space had no gas and no temperature; another, that it had temperature something like 140 degrees centigrade.

## DECIDED FALLING OFF IN MENDICANTS

In Decade Ranks Have Grown Beautifully Less.

## MANY TRICKS IN PROFESSION

As a Rule Those Who Frequent the Streets of the National Capital Are "Tipped Off" by Some of Their Pals Who Consider It a Soft Spot.

"The number of persons who frequent the crowded thoroughfares of the city and solicit alms from pedestrians has taken a decided slump during the last decade," observed an old detective several days ago.

"I remember," he continued, "when there were several hundred such persons traversing the Avenue and Seventh Street, and their pitiable condition would move any human being to pity. I do not mean to say that one-half of them were the least bit deserving of alms, but their looks and entreaties would call for money from almost everyone who chanced to pass them by."

## Many Tricks in the Profession.

"As the world progresses the people in the various walks of life grow wiser and discover there are tricks in all trades. In no other walk of life is there more tricks than in the begging profession. Out of ten men or women who walk the streets day after day soliciting alms seven or eight of them are fakes pure and simple, but the world is moving so fast that the people do not stop to think of this small thing."

"I have seen a wealthy man pass by a supposed cripple and drop him a quarter and then proceed on his way without looking back to see what the man's ailment was, or what he did with the money. I have seen that selfsame cripple wink his eye at another man who made a habit of hanging around places where the cripple visited, and they would go to a nearby saloon and make merry with the money he had accumulated. When the funds would exhaust the faker would go to the corner and beg for more money. They would keep this up until midnight, and then disappear in the direction of a cheap hotel."

## "Tipped Off" by Pals.

"These men and women do not live in this city, as a rule, but have been 'tipped off' by some of their kind that the National Capital is a soft spot, and cashing in is merely a matter of a little time. During any large function held in this city, such as an inauguration or a reunion, the streets are crowded with them; the more people drawn to the city by the occasion, the more fake cripples, blind, deaf mutes, and the like."

"One of the most conspicuous men in this line was a man who was known as 'Texas Jack.' Jack was sixty-five years old, about six feet tall, and wore a large sombrero. He had broad shoulders and legs like those of a piano. He used to sell shoe strings on the streets, but this seemed to be too much like work for him, or injurious to his health, so he gave it up."

## A Free Lunch Grabber.

"He afterward devoted his time to 'gratting.' When he sallied forth, rain or shine, he carried an old faded brown umbrella. That umbrella would hold about two bushels of stuff, and on more than one occasion Jack taxed it to its greatest capacity. Jack would not work, but he would beg, but he managed to navigate all right. With his umbrella slung on his arm he would saunter forth at an early hour in the morning and collect alms from the people enough to feed a regiment. He would walk into every saloon and with his broad, fascinating smile, he would attract the bartender's attention and have a merry chat with him on the topics of the day."

"When the early-morning patrons would come into the place to get their 'eye-openers' Jack would stroll over to the free-lunch counter. There he would busy himself emptying the contents of all of the plates into his umbrella. After he had made a clean sweep he would saunter back to the other saloons on his route, or more properly speaking, his beat. One day he came to grief. Two of the colored porters at a cafe he visited espied him in the act of dumping a dish of potato salad into his umbrella. He left the saloon with the porters at his heels, and was soon overtaken. The contents of his umbrella were promptly dumped out upon the street."

"I think the old man died several years ago. He spent the most of his time seeking a Government position after his free-lunch graft was spoiled. Jack's case is only one of the hundreds which I know of."

## The Gentleman's Return.

Some of the old illiterate colored brethren in the rural districts have queer ideas of life and its amenities. Recently one of them asked his employer to be let off early on a certain day.

"Some one ill?" he was asked.

"No, sah, de society what I belongs ter is holdin' a reception to a gentleman what we ain't seen in some time."

"What gentleman?"

"His name is Dade County."

"What's his business?"

"He was in the burglary business, sah, but he got ketchin'."—Atlanta Constitution.

# PLEA FOR RESTORATION OF ALEXANDRIA COUNTY

Mr. H. Phillips Memorializes the District Committee.

## MANY BURDENS IMPOSED

Caused by Proximity to District—Problems of Police Protection and Improvement of Public Highways Cited as Reasons for Re-annexation.

Mr. H. Phillips, a resident of Alexandria county, Va., who believes that the retrocession of that county is unconstitutional and that it still forms a part of the District of Columbia, has communicated to Congress his views on the question of restoration.

Mr. Phillips' statement is addressed to the House Committee on the District of Columbia, and is as follows:

In the year 1784, pursuant to paragraph 17, section 8, article 1, of the Federal Constitution, Virginia ceded to the United States a small area on the Potomac River to form part of the permanent seat of the General Government. In 1846 Congress passed an act ceding this land back to Virginia, thus dismembering the established seat of government of ten miles square. The portion returned to Virginia was organized as a separate county, only one-fourteenth of the average size of the counties of the State.

## Burdensome Problems.

"The problem of local police protection and improvement of public highways in this little county has become difficult and burdensome on account of the disorder and heavy travel incident to proximity to a large city."

In 1861, the War Department and military forces again took practical possession of the county, building fortifications on every conspicuous eminence within its borders, and at the close of the war retained the Quaker estate of eleven hundred acres, later parceled out and establishing a great national cemetery, a large military post, and a station of the Department of Agriculture, within its boundaries. The United States makes no contribution to the expenses of the local government, notwithstanding its ownership of one-sixteenth of the area and one-seventh of the population.

"The suburbs of cities are peculiarly subject to the presence of unlawful persons who resort to such pools for illicit liquor selling, gambling, and other disorderly conduct near public highways. Especially is this observed on the Sabbath day. The residents of Alexandria, who are a class of respectable, intelligent, and public spirited, the attorney for the county is active and successful in prosecuting offenders brought in to him, and the judiciary resolve in sentencing law breakers. The police force of this small county, limited to a few men, receiving inadequate pay, cannot, however, prevent disorderly persons entering the county from the city of Washington, or preserve order along the extensive river front. The history of municipal governments shows that public order is thus difficult to preserve near boundary lines of a city. Manufacturers constantly seek such border for the commission of unlawful acts, or to escape the strong arm of the law; hence cities are usually extended far beyond the limits of closely-built houses."

## Sanitary Protection Needed.

"Sanitary protection, equally important to public welfare, requires that Alexandria county should be restored to the limits of cities in deposits of waste material, not only contaminating springs and water courses used by unsuspecting persons, but adding by exhalation to the other impurities of city air. Fire protection in suburbs also makes an extension of municipal limits desirable. It is also reasonable that cities control the maintenance of suburban parks and drives, contributing to the health and pleasure of its residents. The circumscribed limits of walls and fortresses observed in the history of feudal towns should be thus brushed aside to admit the advance of science and civilization. The principles applicable to the extension of cities generally become more important when the seat of government and capital of a nation are concerned."

"So, disregarding the legal status of Alexandria county, there are important and practical reasons why it should be restored to the District of Columbia. It was urged in behalf of ceding part of the District of Columbia back to Virginia in 1846, that the United States had no property or buildings in Alexandria county. Now, we find the United States owns three bridges across the river, and in addition, a large share of the lands, buildings, and other improvements in the county, is the property of the National Government."

"An instance of the necessity of police protection occurred a few years ago. Casey's army came to Washington. They were ordered from the city and came over to Alexandria County and camped, and only moved when upon special invitation to the Governor, a company of troops bundled the army, bag and baggage, across the river. The executive officers of the Government, the judiciary, and members of Congress pass over this unpoliced area to and from the Arlington National Cemetery. If injury comes to any official of the Government on the county highways from some criminal or insane person the Government is responsible for neglecting to maintain a jurisdiction imposed by the Constitution."

## The Legal Question.

"It would seem, however, to be a proper subject for judicial inquiry, whether under the Federal Constitution, one or two of the three principal branches of Government have power to alienate a part of the established seat of government. The War Department has built on the county highways water mains, telegraph and telephone lines, and a pumping station on land obtained for bridge approaches in Alexandria county, without authority of Virginia, and without permission of the owners of the fee of the public highways. If Alexandria county is lawfully part of the District of Columbia, the Government is without power of law or just compensation; but if the Supreme Court declares Alexandria county part of the District of Columbia, the Government provides for its police protection, and the Government improvements are within the legislative control of Congress."

"Congress has prohibited fishing at certain times, and in various methods in the waters of the Potomac, along the District. If Alexandria county is part of Virginia, such legislation is wholly unwarranted, and notwithstanding such legislation, Virginians have full riparian rights in the waters of the Potomac opposite Washington, subject only to Virginia law."

"Jackson City has long been a menace to the morals of Washington, but if the establishment of the boundary of Maryland and Virginia has any reasonable interpretation, Jackson City is wholly in the District, and the Commissioners neglect their duties if they do not take Alexandria Island, and abate a stain on Washington city."

"Considering the restoration of Alexandria county to the District, in respect to the wishes of President Washington, it is most worthy of the attention of Congress."

gress. To the efforts of the first and most distinguished President, the location, plan, and success of the Capital may be justly ascribed. It will be a deserved tribute and honor to his memory to restore the original and proper limits surveyed and established under his personal direction.

"Regarding the fitness of the proposed resolution, the Supreme Court has decided that the question is cognizable only in a case between the United States and the State of Virginia, and cannot be adjudicated between other parties. Its decision decides Congress did not exceed its constitutional powers in ceding part of the seat of government to Virginia the contrary ends. If the court decides, however, Congress exceeded its powers, the jurisdiction of Congress, the courts, and Commissioners of the District will therefore extend over the entire ten miles square."

"The people of Alexandria county generally favor a restoration of the original District. Virginia does not wish to lose more territory. The United States paid \$20,000,000 to Spain for a lot of foreign islands and proposes to pay \$5,000,000 to mark for three little tropical islets. So it may not be unjust to contribute \$1,000,000 toward the debt of the mother of States if Alexandria county is restored to the original District."

"The Capital, the seat of general government, is important, however, not only to the people in Washington, and in Virginia, but to the people of the entire nation. The interests of the people, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and from Canada to the Gulf and the detached territory, should be fully and justly considered in the action on the proposed resolution."

## LIKE PAUL REVERE.

Shea Rode Down Mountain in Darkness and Warned Employees.

By a daring horseback ride of two miles in the darkness down a steep mountain valley, with a flood at his heels, John F. Shea, a Pennsylvania lumberman and member of the firm of Shea Bros., who control large timber interests in that section, saved the lives of hundreds of his employees by warning them of the approaching flood.

He was near the top of the mountain when a cloudburst came. Realizing his own danger and that of his employees in the lumber camp two miles down the valley, he braced with his horse. He continued his wild ride down the mountain and reached the sleeping employees just in time to awaken them and give them an opportunity to escape to higher ground.

They had scarcely left the camp when it was swept away by rushing torrents.—Philadelphia North American.

## GUILD OF WOMEN BINDERS.

Beautiful Specimens of Their Work on Show in London.

There are some collectors who collect books for their binders alone, and these, to distinguish them from book lovers, are called bibliophiles. The true book lover associates the binding with the book, and loves them both in so far as the one is in accord with the character of the other. The true book lover will consequently be likely to present himself at Sotheby's, where the collections of books bound by the Guild of Women Binders and by the Hampstead Bindery are now on show.

It is the second exhibition of work of the kind which the women binders have had, and this year the King, following in the footsteps of his mother, has shown a practical interest in the handicraft which the exhibition is designed to encourage by buying five of the specimens. The five specimens are "La Mouche" (A. de Musset), "The Moorish" (Songs from Shakespeare's Plays), in Japan vellum; "Tennyson's Poems," illustrated by Millais, Japan morocco; "Voltaire's Candide," and "The Waste Land," in green morocco, compiled by Wilfred Whitten, green morocco. The King's selection is very representative of the style and quality of the many charming and ingeniously sumptuous bindings which the exhibition furnishes. The books which the binders clothe comprise a number of French and English poets, among whom Browning has been especially fortunate in the bindings dedicated to his work.

Miss Carlsale's designs for No. 4, "Browning's Poems," and Miss Florence de Rheims' bindings, Nos. 5 and 7, "Pippa Passes," are especially graceful, novel, and appropriate. "British Miniature Painters and Their Work," in green morocco, with a design of flowers and leaves, is also very good; and so is Mr. Andrew Lang's "Prince Charles Edward," red morocco, with red design of flowers and leaves. Perhaps the most pleasing binding, in its combination of fitness and ingenuity, is "Walton's Complete Angler," green morocco, with an inlaid design of fish and water lilies. There are, in all, 122 volumes, bound and decorated for the most part with conspicuous success, and it is not possible to mention all of them.

But a last word must be reserved for a monumental piece of work by Mr. Frank Harding, which is a modern illuminated manuscript, on vellum, of the office of the Holy Eucharist, with the Collects. It contains sixty pages in replicated gold, and is decorated throughout with original designs in gold and colors. It represents ten years' work.

## How to Matriculate.

Mr. Peixoto, lodge-keeper at Girard College, brides himself on his intimate knowledge of the regulations of the institution. The other day a bright-looking young hoodlum of some 7 years of age, carrying a telescope bag and with a cigarette jauntily poised in his mouth, entered the lodge.

"Say, I want to come to this school," said the youngster.

"You can't come here if you smoke that thing," answered Peixoto.

"Well, I'll throw it away," was the ready reply.

"Is your father living?" asked the lodge-keeper.

"Course he is," said the boy.

"When's your father's name on the list?"

"Geel!" was the response. "Then to get in I've got to kill the old man. Dat's tough!"—Philadelphia Times.

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